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Francis P. Jones, Editor

Wallace C. Merwin, Executive Secretary
Helen L. Tufts, Associate Secretary

WANG MING-TAO

For some months now there have been rumors that the well-known preacher and evangelist Wang Ming-tao had been executed. We have not reported these rumors in the Bulletin, as they were not well substantiated, but we now have a reliable report of the trial to which Wang Ming-tao was subjected, and which undoubtedly was the cause of these rumors. A correspondent in Hong Kong interviewed a person who was actually present at this trial in Peking, and has sent us the following report. The eye-witness is a Chinese Christian who has recently arrived in Hong Kong from Peking.

The accusation meeting took place in September 1954. All churches and other Christian organizations in Peking suddenly received orders to appoint delegates to attend an accusation meeting against Wang Ming-tao. The charges brought against him in the meeting were: 1. He has not shown sympathy with the government, and his words and actions have not been in accordance with government policy. 2. He has not taken part in the Three Self Reform Movement (now called the Three Self Patriotic Movement). 3. His preaching is very individualistic, its purpose is not clear, and he is a danger to the whole Christian movement. There was great excitement at the meeting, many people talking at once. Wang Ming-tao sat on the platform, never saying a word, and with his eyes fixed on the ceiling. Many of the women present were secretly weeping. Some wished to leave before the meeting was over, in order to show their disapproval, but they were not permitted to go. After the accusations had been presented, the demand was made that he be put to death, or at least put into prison, but not more than about a quarter of those present gave an approving answer to this demand. The rest of them sat there silent.

Several days after the meeting the Student Christian Union of Peking started an "Oppose the persecution of Wang Ming-tao Movement". Many of these students had been regular attendants at Wang Ming-tao's church (In fact nine tenths of Wang Ming-tao's congregation is composed of young people). The Movement spread rapidly, and within a few days most of the churches and other Christian organizations in Peking were taking part in it. From Peking it spread to Tientsin and Shanghai, so that finally Wang Ming-tao's name became known all over China, and many who had never heard of him before now learned what he had been experiencing.

For some weeks after the accusation meeting Wang Ming-tao did not preach publicly in his church, but confined himself to leading prayer-meetings in his own home, to writing, and to personal consultations, while a substitute preached for him on Sunday. But very soon he resumed his Sunday preaching, and the crowds that come to hear him are very large. A loudspeaker has been installed so that those who cannot get into the church may stand in the churchyard and hear the sermon there, and it is reported that even in the coldest winter weather the courtyard was well filled with the overflow. The popular response in his favor has been so strong that it is thought that he now stands in no danger of any further harassment.

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Meantime his quarterly magazine, The Spiritual Food Quarterly, has continued without missing a single issue. In addition, books of his sermons and other writings continue to come from the press without hindrance. The latest report of his continuing success comes by way of a letter from Peking written there on May 18, 1955, in which the crowds at Wang Ming-tao's church services are vividly described. The writer included one page from the April number of Wang Ming-tao's magazine, a page which has a personal message from the editor. This message is dated March 11, and reads as follows, in rather free translation: "In the three months since our last issue we have continued to see the grace and glory of God. Believers are being confirmed in grace and truth, and the number coming to our services is constantly increasing. Even in the coldest weather many people sit in the courtyard because the church is full, and they are able to follow the service by means of a loud-speaker. January 24-30 we had seven days of special evangelistic meetings, with meetings every afternoon at two o'clock, in which we explained the 55th chapter of Isaiah. The number who came to these meetings was the largest we have ever had at our New Year's evangelistic meetings. Even after the vacation days were over, and students had to go back to their classes, the number remained as large as ever. During the last three days many signified their intention of becoming Christians.

"My little book 'How Long Will Ye Halt Between Two Opinions?' was published a few days ago. In response to many requests, we have reprinted the article 'Different Faiths and No Faith' from last fall's quarterly, and the article 'Truth or Poison?' from the winter number as a little book with the title 'Some Important Questions'. This book was published on February 15. On February 22 I began the writing of the material for this spring number of the magazine, but since there have been so many other things to do during the day, most of the writing has been done after midnight.

"Many Christians have kindly written asking about my health. Many have been praying for me, and some have sent me medicine. For all this I am very grateful. Truly the loving fellowship of Christians is a wonderful thing. The pain in my right shoulder is now somewhat better. The numbness in my right hand has now continued for over a year, sometimes worse and sometimes better, but on the whole about the same as a year ago. I have had considerable pain in my left eye during the past few months, which prevents my being entirely comfortable.

"The letters that have come are so many that I cannot answer them all personally, and so I am writing this as an expression of my appreciation of your kindly interest. I hope you will pardon me for answering in this way instead of personally."

The page on which this personal message was printed has also the end of an article marked "Translated February 22, 1955". It is a strong plea for church unity. The first sentences on the page describe a person going up in an airplane. While he is near the ground the fences and hedges that divide one field from another stand out very clearly, but as he gets higher these disappear, and then what he sees is the beauty of the unbroken landscape. "So it is with us in the church. The higher we rise in faith and love and the nearer we draw to God, the more the fences that divide one Christian sect from another tend to disappear, until at last we see only one undivided Christian Church. We are one. In comparison with the love of Christ, His cross, the Bible, the cup of the Lord, and the communion of the saints, all our sectarian divisions are as nothing. We must follow Christ's command and love one another, and then the hedges will soon disappear. On our common pilgrimage to heaven we must comfort and help one another."

NANKING THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Board of Founders of Nanking Theological Seminary held its annual meeting in New York on May 31. Reports were received from Field Representative C. Stanley Smith regarding theological education in Formosa, Siam, Malaya, Indonesia, the Philippines and Burma, and further appropriations were made to these institutions. Plans were also considered for the conference on theological education in the far east which is scheduled to be held in Bangkok in February 1956 under the auspices of the International Missionary Council and Nanking Theological Seminary. F. P. Jones reported that the manuscript of a Chinese version of Wesley's Journal had been sent to Hong Kong for printing. An appropriation for the continuance of this translation project at Drew University was approved. The Board voted to accept the invitation

of the China Committee of the Far Eastern Joint Office to become a regular member.

JUST JENNIE: THE LIFE STORY OF VIRGINIA M. ATKINSON

Mary Culler White has just published this biography of one of the outstanding women missionaries of the Southern Methodist Church (103 pages, paper bound, Tupper and Love, Atlanta, 1955). There is an introduction by Miss Louise Robinson. Jennie was born in 1861, went to China as a missionary in 1885, and then for 55 years made her home in Shanghai, Soochow, and Changshu. She returned to America in January 1941 and died in December of the same year, just four days after Pearl Harbor. Although her main contribution was in the field of building up Christian education for girls, she was also active in the evangelistic work of the church, which was indeed her main concern during the years she was at Changshu. Mary Culler White was her close associate for many years, and those who know her literary ability (author of two other books and many articles, and editor of many anthems in Chinese which have been sung by all the church choirs of China) will need no other assurance that Miss Atkinson's life story is well told. It is a book which will be of interest not only to those who knew Miss Atkinson, but to all those interested in work with women and children in foreign countries. In this life story we can see in epitome the elements that made for greatness and permanence in the missionary work in China during the past two generations.

AN AMERICAN POLICY IN ASIA

This book by W. W. Rostow, with the assistance of Richard W. Hatch (John Wiley and Sons, 1955, 59 typewriter size pages, paper bound, $1.00), is described as a sequel to The Prospects for Communist China, which we reviewed in the May 2 Bulletin. The latter is a scholarly book, made as impersonal as possible. The present volume attempts to apply the results of that scholarly research to the answering of such questions as, Can Communist China be stopped short of war? Why must we protect Formosa? What should American military policy be in Asia? Can we afford effective economic aid to Asia?

The answer is cautiously optimistic. The authors believe that an intelligent and vigorous American policy, directed toward the economic improvement of the free nations of Asia, and administered with a sympathetic understanding of their nationalistic aspirations, will be sufficient to show these nations that the free way of life offers them more than the Communist way. When Communism is no longer on the march, but is forced back upon the defensive, then inner tensions within the Communist bloc will be intensified, the united front will be broken up, and Communism as a military and political force will ultimately disappear.

It is refreshing to read a statement on policy which is not partisan or omniscient, and which recognizes both the favorable and the alarming uncertainties in the road ahead. One who reads this book will not be able to stand up in public again and claim to have all the answers. For this reason I recommend its reading to all our subscribers who are called on from time to time to interpret the Far East.

MISSIONARY NEWS

Rev. Kepler Van Evera, a Presbyterian missionary in Hangchow from 1912 to 1950, died in Springfield, Missouri on May 15.

Father Ludwig Heitfield, a German priest imprisoned in Foochow for 22 months, arrived in Hong Kong the latter part of May. He reported that three American Dominican priests are still in the Foochow prison: Fathers Frederick A. Gordon of Somerset, Ohio, James G. Joyce of Clinton, Mass., and Joseph E. Hyde of Lowell, Mass. As far as he knew, they were in "fair health".

The Catholic Mission Bulletin for May reports the arrival of the following missionaries expelled from the mainland: Johann Fleckner on March 2, and John Schraven, Franc Mittermullner und Heinrich Pielke on March 12, all from Yenchow, Shantung; Louis Merlet, Jesus Martinez Balirach and Xavier Coupe on March 4 from Shanghai; Victorino Garcia and Paul Kretsch from Shanghai, in February; eight sisters from Shanghai, four on March 12 and four on March 21; and two Franciscans Vincento Tardani and Elmer Thiele, from Shanghai, in Febru-